



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

News Release

Pacific Islands External Affairs Office

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Hawaii Receives \$900,000 Grant to Support Land Acquisition of the Manana Valley Watershed

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today that Hawaii will receive a \$900,000 grant for the acquisition of lands in the Manana Valley watershed. The grant money is awarded through the Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program.

The Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program provides funds to states and territories to acquire habitat for endangered and threatened species in approved recovery plans. Acquisition of habitat to secure long term protection is often an essential element of a comprehensive recovery effort for a listed species.

“Land acquisition is the first step in conservation of our precious natural resources,” said Gina Shultz, acting field supervisor for the Service’s Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife office. “This grant award will help strengthen partnerships between government agencies and private landowners while protecting and linking essential habitat for threatened and endangered species.”

Manana Valley, part of the Ko’olau Mountains Watershed Partnership, is a patchwork of managed areas being developed to protect rare and endangered species. These managed areas include State Forest Reserves, Oahu Forest National Wildlife Refuge, and areas controlled by the Department of Defense. This multi-landowner partnership is dedicated to the protection of watershed lands, and perpetuation of the native species that inhabit the area.

Located in the Manana section of the Ewa Forest Reserve, the proposed acquisition will include two parcels of land, totaling 1,625 acres. The Manana/Waimano area provides habitat for twenty rare plant taxa, all of which are endemic to the Hawaiian Islands. The parcels contain six federally listed plants species, and at least one federally listed bird species, and three federally listed Oahu tree snail species.

The two parcels also include five distinct forest types, including wet and mesic forests and four miles of stream adjacent to the State forest reserve.

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The owner of the property, Manana Valley Farm LLC, has agreed to lower the purchase price of the property to the State government by 43% as an in-kind match for the grant to promote conservation and perpetual protection of the area. The total appraisal cost of the two Manana Valley parcels is \$1,580,000.

The goal of the Manana Valley Watershed Protection Project has three phases. Phase one is to acquire the two parcels of land in fee, and then add them to the existing Waimano Forest Reserve parcel and manage the area for native species and ecosystem protection, research, and public education. Phase two of the project will be to develop a management plan for the area, and the final phase is to implement the management plan.

Nationally, \$13.5 million was provided through the Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program. Funded through the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund and authorized by Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act, the grants enable States to work with private landowners, conservation groups, and other agencies to initiate conservation planning efforts and acquire and protect habitat to support the conservation of threatened and endangered species.

For more information on the 2004 grant awards see the Service's Endangered Species home page at [**http://endangered.fws.gov/grants/section6/index.html**](http://endangered.fws.gov/grants/section6/index.html).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 544 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 63 Fish and Wildlife Management offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.